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Agenda item 17

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS TWENTY-NINTH SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: G. M. CHARUMBIRA (Botswana)

Chapter _____

INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS

(Agenda item 8)

1. The Commission considered item 8 of its agenda at the 483rd meeting, on 11 February 1997. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics (E/CN.3/1997/10, annex);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the revised concepts and definitions for international merchandise trade statistics (E/CN.3/1997/11);

(c) Draft revised concepts and definitions for international merchandise trade statistics (PROV/ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/52/Rev.2).

Action taken by the Commission

2. The Commission:

(a) Decided that the order of priority for carrying out methodological work should be:

(i) A compilers manual;

(ii) A revision of Customs Areas of the World (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/30/Rev.2);[1]

(iii) Technical information on index numbers of international trade statistics;

(b) Encouraged all countries to supply their current international trade statistics to the United Nations Statistics Division in terms either of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS), if that commodity classification was used by a country, or of whatever commodity classification was in use in the country; and to respond positively to the Statistics Division's request to supply previous years of data in terms of HS, where available, for the purpose of completing the Statistics Division database according to HS;

(c) Welcomed the adoption, by the Harmonized System Committee of the World Customs Organization (WCO), of the draft recommendation that countries should provide to the United Nations Statistics Division their international trade statistics according to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, and expressed its support for the adoption of that draft recommendation by the Council of WCO;

(d) Decided that the Task Force on International Trade Statistics should continue to function, and address those issues set out in its report (E/CN.3/1997/10) to the Commission and other issues within its established terms of reference;

(e) Adopted the draft revised concepts and definitions for international merchandise trade statistics (PROV/ST/ESA/SER.M/52/Rev.2), subject to the Secretariat's incorporating such editorial and substantive amendments as were consistent with maintaining the structural integrity of the draft text;

(f) Requested the Secretariat to publish and distribute the revised concepts and definitions;

(g) Also requested the Secretariat to work towards further harmonization of the concepts and definitions for international merchandise trade statistics with the 1993 System of National Accounts (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/2/Rev.4)[2] and the fifth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual.[3]

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[1] Statistical Papers, No. 30/Rev.2 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.XVII.12).

[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XVII.4.

[3] Washington, D.C., International Monetary Fund, 1993.